To all Such as

COMPLAIN

They want POWER,

Not applying Themſelves to yield Subjection to what of God is made Manifeſt in them.

ALSO,

Some DIRECTIONS to the Panting SOUL, which hath long been Travelling in the Letter, but hath not yet been Acquainted with the POWER, that it may feel the Spring, and come to drink there of the Living Waters.

TOGETHER,

With ſome Queſtions and Anſwers, ſhewing MAN his Duty, and pointing him to the Principle of God in his heart.

Likewiſe,

Some Queſtions and Anſwers Concerning the Seed of *Jacob*, and the true Church.

By *Iſaac Pennington.*

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To all such as complain that they want Power, *thus applying themselves to yield Subjection to what of God is made manifest in them, upon a pretence of waiting for* Power *so to do.*

THE Lord God of Eternal Power, who made Man in his own Image, he ſtretcheth forth his Arm to ſave and redeem his loſt Creature. It is his Power alone, that effecteth the work of Redemption. He quickneth man, who is dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins. He keepeth alive, and leadeth on the quickned Soul in the path of Life. He conquereth, ſcattereth, and ſubdueth all the Enemies round about the Soul, even all the luſts, corruptions, and temptations, which lead unto, and entangle in Perdition.

Yet the Lord God requireth ſomewhat of the man whom he ſaveth, without which being found in man, and returned to him from man, he ſaveth him not.

Queſt. *What doth he require of Man?*

Anſw. He requireth of Man, *Repentance*,

Faith and Obedience. That he ſhould turn at his Call, from the Darkneſs to the Light; that he ſhould truſt in, and cleave to the Light, but believe the ſpirit of Darkneſs no more; and laſtly, that he ſhould obey the Light, follow the Light, walk in the foot-ſteps of the living towards the Land of Light; work the Works of God in the Light.

Queſt. *How can man do this?*

Anſw. Of himſelf he cannot: But being touched, being quickned by the Eternal Power, being turned by a ſecret vertue and ſtirring of life in his Heart, then he can turn towards that which turneth him. Being drawn by the Life, by the Power; he can follow after the Life, and after the Power. Finding the ſweetneſs of the living Vine, and his Soul made alive by the Sap of the Vine, his heart can now cleave to, and abide in the Vine, and bring forth the Fruit of the Living Faith and Obedience to the Husband-man, who dayly dreſſeth the heart, that waiteth in the living Principle for further life from the Fountain, that it may bring forth the Fruits of Life more and more.

Now mark: Is it poſſible for any man to come to the Eternal Reſt, that travels

not in the Path? Or is there any Path, but the repentance, faith and obedience of the Living Spirit, even of the Child begotten by the Eternal Power, who is taught by its Father to abide and walk in the Life, and in the Power?

God putteth forth his Hand all the day long, to fetch home loſt man. He hath given him a Talent, a living Talent, which is able to work man into Life, and to bring forth the fruits of life in man. Man overlooks the Talent, joyns not his heart to it, brings not forth the fruits of Life to the giver, but cries he wants power, and *what is he? what can he do? can he cleanſe his own heart? can he kill his corruptions? can he quicken himſelf?* &c.

Now mark again. There are ſeveral diſpenſations of God to mankind, in all which man (of himſelf) falls ſhort of the Life, of the Power, of the Glory, and comes under Condemnation. God layes the blame on man, for not hearkning, for not believing, for not walking with him. Man layes the blame on God, and ſays he wants power. Look on him who is not obedient to the light, which he cannot but confeſs to ſhine in his heart, and often to reprove him; ask him why he doth not

obey it? is not this his plea, that he wants Power? Now let men consider, will this stand before the Throne of God? This is the condemnation, that men do not believe the Light of Life, do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: do not trust and follow the light which would lead them to life, but trust and follow the darkness which leads into death, and into everlasting Condemnation. Their plea is, they want power so to do. Is this true?

I confess the power doth not so flow forth to man, as man expects it: but the power of life works man out of death in a mystery, and begins in him as weakness. There is all the strength, all the power of the enemy, against the work of God in the heart. There is but a little thing (like a grain of mustard-seed) a weak thing, a foolish thing, even that which is not (to man's eye) to overcome all this: and yet in this is the power. And here is the great deceit of man: He looks for a great manifest power in or upon him to begin with, and doth not see how the power is in the little weak stirrings of life in the heart, in the rising up of somewhat against the mighty strength of corruption in him, which he returning towards, cleaving to, and waiting

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ing upon the Lord in, the ſtrength of the Lord will be made manifeſt in its ſeaſon, and he will be drawn nearer and nearer to the Lord, and his enemies be overcome and fall he knows not how. But he that waits for ſuch a mighty appearance of power at firſt, looking ſo to begin, and after that manner to be preſerved and carryed on, can never in this capacity ſo much as walk in the path Eternal, nor is not in the way of receiving the power, which ſprings up as weakneſs, and leads on and overcomes enemies in a myſterious way of working, and not in ſuch a manifeſt and direct way of conqueſt, as man's wiſdom expects.

The ſeed of the Kingdom is ſown man knows not how, even by a ſound of the Eternal Spirit, which he is not a fit Judge of: and it grows up he knows not how: and the power appears and works in it, in a way that he is not aware of. He looks for the Kingdom, the Power and the Life, in a way of his obſervation, anſwerable to the thoughts and expectations of his heart. But thus it never comes, but in the way of its own eternal motion, it ſprings in the hearts of many, and they overlook the thing, and turn from it dayly, not knowing its proper way of appearance, but expecting it ſome

other way. And thus the enemy holds them in the bands of death, and they are captives in the ſtrange Land, refuſing the Prince of Life in his dayly offers of Life, becauſe they look not for him thus, but after another way and manner. And till this eye of obſervation be put out in them, they can never clearly ſee the appearance of the Saviour to them, nor feel the efficacy of his ſaving of them from that, from which none but he can deliver.

Now for the ſakes of ſuch as are ſingle-hearted, and yet with-held from the enjoyment of the Life of God and of his pure Power, through a way of wrong expecting it, I ſhall ſay a little concerning the operation of the power in quickning, and leading on the quickned ſoul, as alſo concerning the way of its ſpringing up in the heart, and the neceſſity of this way.

I my ſelf was long with-held from obedience to the Light Eternal, in its low appearance of diſcovering and convincing of ſin, through this very deceit, believing that my condition required the manifeſt appearance of a very great power to help me: and ſo when ſin overcame me, I did only mourn over it, crying after, and waiting for power, but was kept from joyning

with

with, and cleaving to that, wherein the power ſprings up, and manifeſts it ſelf according to its own pleaſure, quite contrary to the way of man's expectation.

The opperations of the Power are divers and gradual, according to the condition and neceſſity of the Soul whom it viſits, and reacheth forth its hand unto.

1. There is a diſcovery of the darkneſs, and of the erring of the heart from God. This is power; for this ſhould never be in any heart, could all the powers of darkneſs there withſtand it.

2. There is a riſing of the heart againſt the evil, with a deſire of deliverance from it, and of the ſpringing up of the good in ſuch power as might conquer it. This is a further appearance of power than the former, and a good beginning towards believing or joyning with the redeeming Arm, which all the Powers of darkneſs (with all manner of ſubtilty) endeavour to divert the heart from.

3. There is an upright frame of ſpirit begotten, and a truth of heart formed towards the Lord, from which deſires, and cryes and groans after his life and preſence, and for deliverance from the enemy, and from under the power of his deceit,

deceit, ſpring more and more.

4. There is a fear begotten in the heart of being deceived by the enemy, of being drawn from the feeling of, and panting after the Life and Power of God.

5. There is an hope and truſt in the Lord's Goodneſs and Mercy, with a dayly waiting for his appearance, for the manifeſtation of his Spirit and pure Preſence, and for the ſpringings up of his freſh Life, and precious Vertue.

6. There are overturnings of the enemy, battering down his ſtrong holds, breaking of many ſnares, beating back of many furious aſſaults, and cauſing the plant of Life to grow up, and Triumph over all the power of darkneſs.

7. There are ſecret ſtayings and upholdings of the heart in the hour of darkneſs, when God ſees neceſſary to let forth the power thereof upon the Soul, and to Eclipſe his own power. When the enemy buffets, tempts, prevails, and gets ground upon the Soul, is drawing it back under the vail, even into the Pit, and nothing appears near to ſtop it, or Reſcue the Soul from death, and from the power of the Grave, but the ſting thereof enters and deeply wounds the Soul; yet even then the

the power is near, ſecretly upholding, preſerving and watching over the Soul, and waiting for the proper ſeaſon of Deliverance. *Nevertheleſs I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me by my right hand*, ſaid David, when his feet had almoſt ſlipped into the grievous ſnare of deſperate unbelief, and murmuring, againſt God's dealings with him and the reſt of his people.

Many more opperations of the Power might be mentioned, even of its tabernacling and glorious appearing in ſome veſſels in various wayes, both delighting it ſelf in the heart, and alſo filling the heart with delight and joy in the pure Life: but theſe things are better enjoyed and ſweetly felt, in the ſilence of the fleſhly part, then ſpoken of to that ear, which is not fit to hear the ſound thereof.

2dly. *The way of the Powers ſpringing up in the Heart*, which is, 1. In its turning from the Darkneſs, in the Faith and in the pure Obedience, which flowes from the faith. For as the Soul turns from the power of darkneſs and death towards the living Power, towards the power of the Eternal Spirit of Light: ſo the Power meets it, embraces it, appears to it, and

manifeſts it ſelf in it, proportionable to its preſent capacity and condition. And as the Soul, being touched with the living Vertue, gives it ſelf up to believe, and to truſt the power which draws: ſo the power manifeſts it ſelf in the heart, according to the proportion of the Faith which the Eternal Vertue hath begotten there. And as the Soul, in the Faith, gives it ſelf up to obey: ſo the power appears and works the obedience. For we can do nothing of our ſelves: but being called, being drawn, being required to do that which is far beyond our ſtrength, and giving up thereto, the Life ſprings, the Power appears, which does the work. This the *Philippians* had experience of, to whom the Apoſtle gave that exhortation, *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* It is the unbeliever hangs back, and cries where ſhall I have power? But the Faith follows the moving and drawing of the ſpirit, and the Power never fails the Faith. But that which cries, how ſhall I get out of *Egypt?* which way ſhall I ever be able to paſs through this intricate wilderneſs? how ſhall I overcome thoſe mighty Enemies,

which

which already have the poſſeſſion of the Land I ſhould inherit, and are ſtrongly fenced in it, and mighty in ſtrength to keep their hold thereof? This is not the right Seed, this is not the true *Iſrael*, for whom the everlaſting inheritance of the Life and of the pure Power is prepared.

2. Under the Croſs, under the yoak to the corrupt (yea and to the very natural) the power ſprings. The falſe birth would have the power ſpring in a way pleaſing to it ſelf; at the time its wiſdom ſees neceſſary, and in the way its Will would have it: but the power ſprings up according to its own wiſdom, at its own time, and after its own way. When the man would have it, then it flies from him: and when it is not expected, nor perhaps deſired, (at leaſt in that way wherein it chuſes to appear) then it ſprings up and puts forth it ſelf. Moſt men, that have felt any thing of God, cannot but deſire his Life and Power: But moſt flie the Croſs, wherein it hath choſen to appear; and ſo they can never meet with, but are ſtill complaining for the want of it. In the power is the eaſe, the reſt of the Goſpel. *Take my Yoak upon you, and learn of me*, ſaith Chriſt, and ye ſhall find the reſt which flows from the Power. This made

made *Paul* rejoyce in the Croſs of Chriſt, whereby the fleſhly luſts were brought down in him, and the Life and Eternal Power ſprang in the Seed of the Kingdom: For under the Croſs the ſeed grows up and flouriſhes, and the fleſh withers and dies: And as the power of fleſh and death waſtes, ſo the Power of Spirit and Life *In*creaſes.

3. The power ſprings under the fear, and in the uprightneſs & love which God hath begotten. *I* put theſe together, for there is a cloſe unity between them. The fear is the dwelling of the upright heart, and the love is within the fear. He that diſtruſts himſelf, feels his own nothingneſs, finds no power to do any thing God requireth; and yet alſo fears to ſtay behind the light of God's Spirit, in any thing it requires, and ſo finds a putting on forward in the Faith: in him the power delights to appear. He that would feel ſtrength beforehand, and act in the ſence of that ſtrength, from him the power withdraws: But he that is weak, and hath no ſtrength, but ſtill as it freely drops into him from moment to moment, this is the veſſel the power chuſeth to manifeſt it ſelf to, and to be continually appearing in.

This

This is the New Covenant, *I will put my fear in their hearts*, and where the fear of the New Covenant is found, ſo much life, power, and Eternal vertue, as is neceſſary for the preſent ſtate of that heart, cannot be far off. So in the *upright-hearted*, in the heart that is true to God, the power of deceit cannot dwell, but the Power of Truth delights to fill it, in a way ſuitable to the ſtate of the Spirit, and ſo as may be ſeen by the eye of the ſpirit, and felt by the ſpiritual ſence. And in the *Love* is the conſtraining power, which conſtrains from the evil path, from the path of unbelief & diſobedience, into the Path of Life.

3dly. *The neceſſity of this way of the ſpringing up of the Power*, and not in ſuch a manifeſt way as man's heart deſires, and as man's eye expects.

It is neceſſary in ſeveral reſpects. *In reſpect of God, in reference to the creature, and in reference to the Soul's enemies.*

1. *In reſpect of God.* It is neceſſary that his Power and Life ſhould ſpring up in the creature in its own way, acording to the counſel of his own wiſdom, ſuitable to his own nature, and not in the way which the creature chalks out and expects it in. God muſt be like himſelf, and walk in his own

Path

Path in every thing he does. He is a God that hideth himself in the mystery of his working, throughout the whole track of man's Redemption: and man must be wrought out of himself, out of his own thoughts, expectations, gathered apprehensions concerning the kingdom and way to life, and led in a path he doth not know (nor ever can know any longer then he is in it) and in wayes he hath not been acquainted with. The way of Life is still new, every moment fresh and living; and the earthly part of those, who may have in some measure felt the power of regeneration, cannot know it, nor walk in it. Consider this, O ye that fence your selves against the present appearance of the Spirit, and against the Convictions, Demonstrations and Drawings of its Eternal light and Power, by somewhat which ye have formerly felt and known.

2. *In reference to the Creature*, the Power of God must needs appear thus hiddenly, and in such a misterious way.

1. That the Creature might go through all those exercises of Spirit, which are necessary to fit it for its inheritance in the holy Land. There are *straits, wants, tryals, temptations, inward weaknesses, buffettings*

from

from the Enemy, with-drawings of the life, &c. God ſeeth neceſſary to Exerciſe the Spirits of his with, that he might fit them for himſelf, and for a ſafe enjoyment of his life in fulneſs; which could not be, if there were ſuch a manifeſt power to begin with, and continually at hand to perform all in and for the Soul, as many men wait for and think neceſſary to have.

2. That the fleſhly part might be throughly worn out and deſtroyed. When the Power appears and works mightily in Soul, there is ſomewhat apt to get up, to exalt himſelf by the Power, and to abuſe the Power: and if the Power were not withdrawn, and this tormented and famiſhed in the abſence of the Power, and in the withdrawing of the ſweet appearance of Life, a wrong thing would be ſtealing into the *Inheritance*, and the Soul would never be throughly purified, nor come to a pure enjoyment of the power. Therefore doth the *Lord* appear in this myſterious way, *That the Promiſe might be ſure to the Seed*; that the Seed which is the right Heir of the power, might come alone to inherit the Power, and the falſe birth not touch the leaſt enjoyment of it, but feel the bitter ſtroaks of death and de-

ſtruction from it. What had become of *Paul*, if he had had power to reſiſt the buffettings of the enemy, as he deſired? would not this fleſhly part have remained in the exaltation, and not have been brought down? (2 *Cor.* 12.7.)

3. *In reference to the Enemy.* The enemy could never be wholly conquered, his ſtrong holds in the heart broken down, and the redemption from under his hand perfected, were it not for this myſterious way of the appearing and working of the Power, even out of the ſight of man's eye, and contrary to his will and expectation. For had man ſuch a power as he deſires, ſtill preſent with him; had he Faith in his power, or obedience in his power, or could he take up the croſs in his power, or have ſtrength to fight againſt the enemy as he deſires and expects, the enemy would ſtill find entrance into him, and keep his hold of him. But God who knoweth the ſtate of the creature, with the ſtrength and paſſages of the enemy into man, by working with his mighty power in man according to his own will, and in the way of his own Wiſdom (contrary to what man can deſire or expect, but as he is taken into, and comprehended in the Eternal

nal Will) carries on his work ſweetly, and ſafely, and perfects the Salvations of thoſe who will not, who run not, who deſire not to be any thing, but wait to feel his and know his Power, and to become ſubject to it, and lie under, even in the loweſt way of its manifeſtation and appearance.

Object. *This may be true in the ordinary way of Redemption of Souls; but there are deep captivities (even the captivity of* Babylon *inwardly and ſpiritually) which ſurely will need a very great appearance of the Power of God to deliver out of: and what can that ſoul do, but wait there under the captivity, untill that mighty power ariſe?*

Anſw. It is true; The Power muſt needs be very great, and the appearance of it wonderful, which delivers out of ſuch captivity: but yet the beginnings of it may be ſmall, and out of the ſight of that eye, which looks and waits for ſo great an appearance. Haſt thou not light enough already to begin thy travel out of *Babylon*? Haſt thou begun thy travel? Doſt thou walk in the Light, which ſhineth upon thee in that dark Land, to gather and lead thee out of it? Or wilt not thou begin to come out, till the very glory and brightneſs of *Sion* ſhine upon thee? If there be but light

and power enough, to lead thee one ſtep out of the Land of darkneſs, and confuſion of Spirit, towards obedience to the loweſt or meaneſt truth, that is ſufficient for thee at preſent: and as thou art found faithful here, more will ſpring in thee. But if thou ſtop here (or at any time after thou haſt begun and made ſome progreſs, becauſe of any thing which falleth out concrary to thy expectation) then that, which ſhould lead thee on and ſtrengthen thee, ſtops alſo; and thou meeteſt not with that, which is found & enjoyed by others in the way, becauſe thou paſſeſt not on in it, but baulkeſt thy proper path, judging ſomewhat more neceſſary towards thy beginning or progreſs, then the Lord judgeth, or yet ſeeth fit to impart to thee. Thus the enemy betrayes thee, and holds thee in his chains, which might be looſed and caſt off by little and little, didſt thou ſingly give up, to the little appearance of that light and power which is able to unbind them, and not expect more at firſt (or afterwards) then the Lord hath allotted for thy preſent condition. And let me tell thee this from certain knowledge and experience; That thou, who haſt been high, and haſt taſted much of God, but haſt abuſed it,

it, and fed the wrong part with it, both in thy ſelf and others: Thou muſt be brought lower than the reſt, and for a long ſeaſon be kept lower, that the pure ſeed (which hath deeply been buried in thee) may over-grow and ſink all thy knowledge, experiences and obſervations concerning the Eternal Life, and its way of appearance, which formerly thou hadſt ſome true taſte of, but now holdſt out of the Life. Thou muſt come down, thou muſt become nothing by degrees, thou muſt lie at the foot of the reprovings of that Light, which thou thinkeſt thou haſt gone far beyond, and be glad of a little help now and then in the lowlineſs and humility of thy heart, which muſt not chuſe what appearance and manifeſtation it will have from God, before it will begin to follow him, but be glad of never ſo little, that the infinite Wiſdom ſees good to give forth by the hand of his Mercy.

Who ever have been high, and are ſtill waiting and expecting in the heights of their own wiſdom and obſervations concerning the Kingdom, let them take heed of *deſpiſing the day of ſmall things*, and know that their proper beginning (yea the very path of Eternal Life it ſelf) lies in the

lowneſs, in the humility, even into that nothingneſs which bows before the leaſt light of the day, and with gladneſs of heart enters into, and walks in it. For this I certainly know, the wiſe, the obſerving eye, the vaſt comprehending heart, which waits for ſuch an extraordinary Power, judging it cannot begin following the Light, which daily appears to check and reprove, without ſome great manifeſt appearance of power; This cannot ſee the low little path of Life, which is proper for it to walk in, and to the end whereof it muſt travel, if ever it come to ſit down in the Kingdom, or to inherit the power of the endleſs Life. Pretious is the diſpenſation of this Age, great is the Power and Glory which is ariſing: but the wiſe and knowing of this Age, are ſhut out of it, as they have been out of the Life and Truth of the diſpenſations of God in all Ages. Happy is he who is not above that, wherewith God viſiteth his ſoul to redeem it.

A POST-SCRIPT.

THat perſons, who have not travelled into the Land of Life, want power, that is out of doubt. The ſtate of *Iſrael* in its

its travels, is a ſtate of weakneſſes and wants. How can they in the Wilderneſs but want that, which is to be poſſeſſed in the Holy Land? But doſt thou want power to begin the travel with? doſt thou want what proportion of power the Lords ſees neceſſary for thee in thy preſent eſtate? Is there nothing at all diſcovered to thee which is contrary to God, either in thy Heart, or in thy Converſation, or in thy Worſhip, which thou doſt not ſo much as ſtrive to give up to the Lord in, waiting upon him for his power & ſtrength to appear in helping thee. The Light appears to diſcover & lead out of the darkneſs; Now in giving up to the Light, and not doubting but that which calls and draws out will give ſtrength; and enable to come out, the Power is met with unawares. But that which ſtands gazing and looking out after a power, which it expects to meet with, before it will ſo much as begin to follow the Light; that cannot but abide in the captivity, and miſs of that Power which redeemeth from it. Therefore,

I. Wait to feel the Light of life diſcovering and drawing from the evil: and let it chuſe what it ſhall pleaſe firſt to diſcover and draw from. And though it be

little, and very inconsiderable in thine eyes, yet dispute not, but where the light first begins to lead, do thou there begin to follow.

Then in this waiting and subjecting to the manifestations of the Light, out of the self-will, self-wisdom, self-knowledge, self-judgment, in the lowliness and abasedness of the mind and spirit before the Lord, the begettings of life in the light are felt, and the renewing into his pure Image.

Afterwards that which is begotten (and begun to be renewed in the Divine *Image*) is by degrees taught more distinctly to know, discern and walk in the path of Life.

And after this, to that which is thus begotten, and taught the living faith and obedience (which is wrought by the mighty Power of God, though running in a low, secret, hidden way from the eye of the creature) the great Power is revealed, and he grows strong in the Power for God, and against the enemies of his Soul: and by this strength and feeling of Gods presence, they fall dayly and continually before him, and then his victory over them goes on with joy.

But

But he that ſtops at firſt may grow wiſe and conceited, concerning the things of the Kingdom after the fleſh, and may hope for great things at laſt: but by the deceit of the ſubtilty, is kept out of the living path, wherein they are to be waited for, reaped and enjoyed.

Now for the encouragement of ſuch, as are willing to travel on in the weakneſs, yielding up their members to the preſent manifeſtation of the Light, and waiting for the further appearance of the Power: It is on my heart to add a letter of a dear friend and brother of mine in the Truth, who hath been a deep traveller and fellow-ſufferer with me formerly, before this help came forth from the Throne of God, ſince the day-ſpring from on high hath vouchſafed to viſit us, and to guide our feet in the way of everlaſting Peace.

The letter is as followeth.

Dear friend,

MY dear and tender love ſalutes thee, in that love from whence I had my being, and from whence ſprung all my Fathers Children, who are born from above, Heirs of an everlaſting Inheritance. Oh! how ſweet and pleaſant are the Paſtures which my Father cauſeth

causeth all his Sheep to feed in; there is variety of plenty in his Pastures, milk for Babes, and strong meat for them of riper Age, and Wine to refresh those, that are ready to faint, even the Wine of the Kingdom, that makes glad the heart, when it is ready to faint, by reason of the infirmities; Sure I am, none can be so weary but he takes care of them, nor none so nigh fainting, but he puts his arms under their heads, nor none can be so beset with enemies on every side, but he will arise and scatter; nor none so heavy laden and big with young, but he takes notice of them, and gently leads them, and will not leave them behind, unto the merciless Wolf, because they are his own, & his life is the price of their Redemption, and his blood of their Ransome; and if they be so young that they cannot go, he carries them in his Arms, and when they can feel nothing stirring after him, his bowels earn after them; so tender is this good Shepherd after all his flock: I can tell, for I was as one that once went astray, and wandered upon the barren Mountains, and when I had wearied my self with wandring, I went into the Wilderness, and there I was torn as with Bryars, and pricked as with Thorns, sometimes thinking this was the way, and sometimes concluding that was the way, and by and by concluding all was out of the way,

and

and then bitter mourning came upon me, and weeping for want of the interpreter; for when I ſought to know what the matter, and where I was, it was too hard for me; then I thought I would venture on ſome way where it moſt was likely to find a loſt God, and I would pray with them that prayed, & faſt with them that faſted, and mourn with them that mourned, if by any means I might come to reſt, but found it not, until I came to ſee the candle lighted in my own houſe, and my heart ſwept from thoſe thoughts and imaginations, and willings, and runnings, and to die unto them all, not heeding of them, but watching againſt them, leſt I ſhould let my mind go a whoring after them; and here I dwelt for a time as in a deſolate Land uninhabited, where I ſate alone as a Sparrow upon the houſe top, and was hunted up and down like a Partridge upon the mountains, and could reſt no where, but ſome luſt or thought or other followed me at the heels, and diſquieted me night and day, until I came to know him in whom was reſt, and no occaſion of ſtumbling, in whom the Devil hath no part, and he became unto me as a hiding-place from the ſtorms, & from the tempeſts then came my eyes to ſee my Saviour, and my ſorrow to fly away, and he became made unto me all in all, my Wiſdom, my Righteouſneſs, and my Sanctifi-

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cation, in whom I was, and am compleat, to the praiſe of the riches of his Grace and goodneſs that endures for ever. Therefore be not diſcouraged, Oh! thou toſſed as with tempeſts, nor diſmayed in thy ſelf; becauſe thou ſeeſt ſuch mighty hoſts of enemies riſing up againſt thee, and beſetting thee on every ſide, for none was ſo beſet and tryed, and tempted, as the true Seed was, who was a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, but be thou ſtill in thy mind, and let the Billows paſs over, and Wave upon Wave, and fret not thy ſelf becauſe of them, neither be caſt down, as if it ſhould never be otherwiſe with thee; ſorrow comes at night, but joy in the morning, and the days of thy mourning ſhall be over, and the accuſer will God caſt out for ever; for therefore was I afflicted, and not comforted, and tempted, and tryed, for this end, that I might know how to ſpeak a word in due ſeaſon, unto thoſe who are tempted and afflicted as I once was: as it was ſaid unto me in that day when ſorrow lay heavy upon me, therefore be not diſconſolated, neither give heed unto the reaſonings and diſputings of thy own heart: nor the fears that riſe there from, but be ſtrong in the Faith, believing in the Light which lets thee ſee them, and his Grace thou wilt know to be ſufficient for thee, and his ſtrength to be made perfect in

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thy weakneſs, and ſo wilt thou rather glory in thy infirmities, that his power may reſt upon thee, then in thy earneſt deſires to be rid of them, for by theſe things thou wilt come to live in the Life of God, and Joy in God, and glory in Tribulation, when thou haſt learned in all conditions to be contented, and through tryals, and deep exerciſes, is the way to learn this leſſon. Theſe things in dear love to thee I have written, being ſomewhat ſenſible of thy condition, and the many ſnares thou art dayly lyable unto; therefore watch, that thou fall not into temptation, and my God and Father keep thee in the Arms of eternal Love, over all, unto the End, unto his Praiſe, Amen. J. Crook.

Some Queries to the ſtrict and zealous Profeſſors of this Age (ſuch as ſtick in the Letter, but are ſtrangers to the Life and Power) to provoke them to Jealouſie, leaſt the Heathen and open Sinners outſtrip them, and enter into the Kingdom of the pure everlaſting Light before them.

Qu. 1. *WHether God, ſince the Fall of Man from the purity and glory of his State, doth truly and really deſire the Salvation of all mankind; and ſo would have them*

them come to the knowledge of the Truth, that they might believe it, receive it, walk in it, and so obtain Salvation thereby? or whether he would have onely some few of them to receive it and be saved, and the rest to perish?

Qu. 2. If God would all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth, which is the means of Salvation: Then, whether there is sufficient done by God to convey the knowledge of his Truth to all men, so as they may come to the knowledge thereof, and be saved? Or, whether there is such a defect on Gods part, that some men never had sufficient means to come so far to the knowledge of his Truth, as that they might come into the way of Salvation thereby?

Qu. 3. Though God doth please to add superabundant means, in the riches of his Grace, towards some more than others: as to the Jewes under the Law, and to the Disciples of Christ under the Gospel: yet whether there is not so much Light of the Spirit communicated to all, as if followed, might lead them out of the Darkness, and from under the Power of it?

Qu. 4. Whether God be not so near to every man, as that possibly he may seek after him, and find him, and if he do find him, and his heart cleave to him, whether it can possibly be,

be, but vertue ſhould iſſue forth from God, to draw him out of the alienation from him, and out of the power of Sin, Death and Hell.

Qu. 5. *Whether if a man feel God, and cleave to God, and begin to diſcern the ſtreamings of Light from him, and follow the Lord therein: Whether God will not accept this man therein? And whether his Divine Light let into him (being believed in and obeyed) will not purifie him from the darkneſs, unbelief and diſobedience? And whether God will not impute to this man what Chriſt performed on man's behalf in the fleſh, he being in unity with, and in ſubjection to the Light and Power whereby it was wrought (wherein is the fellowſhip with the blood, & wherein alone it waſheth from the ſin) though as to outward knowledge of what was outwardly done, the man may poſſibly be ignorant? And ſeeing it is not abſolutely neceſſary towards the involving in the guilt of* Adams *ſin, the outward knowing what* Adam *did; but the proceeding from, and being found in the ſame ſpirit and nature doth ſufficiently convey it: So whether being gathered into, & found in Chriſts ſpirit, even in Faith, Obedience, and Subjection to the Light thereof in the heart; whether this is not alſo ſufficient to convey the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt? And whether God will fail to impute it to that man?*

Qu. 6.

Qu. 6. *Whether True Religion, Spiritual Worſhip, and the Salvation of the Soul, do not depend upon the Spirit of the Lord, who is near to every heart with his Eternal Light, which he can eaſily convey to any heart, whoſe ear is opened to hearken to his breathings and drawings? So that it is eaſie to the Lord to ſave any of the Sons of men, even in the darkeſt and remoteſt corners of the earth: and he can caſt off thoſe who ſeem higheſt in zeal, and moſt flouriſhing under any outward means of Salvation.*

Oh wonderfully infinite is the Lord! who ſhall bound his Spirit? Happy is he that feareth before him, & in his fear learneth to depart from iniquity, and walk in the good Path that his Spirit teacheth. He is near to God, and ſhall taſt of the good things, and ſhall not be rejected for want of outward knowledge; but what ever was done for loſt man, he that is found in the light of Life (and in the obedience to the ſpirit of Life) ſhall reap the benefit of. But he that boaſts in his knowledge of theſe things, and of his Faith in Chriſt Jeſus; yet not being found in the true, living, eternal light of the Spirit (but an enemy to it, and ignorant of it) the Lord will will rend his confidence from him, in a day that he is not aware of. Glo-

Glorious was the diſpenſation of the Law, and great was the advantage to the Jews thereby above the Gentiles. Yet they miſſing the Spirit and Life of it, (and growing wiſe in their own apprehenſions and interpretations about it) fell beneath the Gentiles, becoming greater ſtrangers to the power and wiſdom of God, and harder to be reached and brought in under the ſubjection of the Goſpel. More glorious was the diſpenſation of the Goſpel to the Chriſtians, and much greater was their advantage, than that of the Jews. But an Apoſtacy coming, and they looſing the true power and Spirit, and growing wiſe by a litteral knowledge of ſome of the things of God in the earthly part, and forming interpretations of Scriptures, and entring into practices in that wiſdom, they are now become at as great a diſtance from this powerful viſitation of God by his Spirit (which raiſeth the Seed, and ſpringeth up freſhly in the hearts of thoſe, whom the Lord our God doth call out of their fenced Cities, and allure into the Wilderneſs) as the Jews were at, from that appearance before the Apoſtacy: and in as great danger are the Children of the Kingdom to be caſt out now, as then. Oh

that my God would pleaſe to open the ear of ſome tender and upright-hearted among them to hear this teſtimony, that they might no longer ſtumble at that, which alone is able to lead them to God, and to make them happy in God.

Is there any uniting with God, or enjoying of God, but by his Spirit? Is there any receiving of Gods Spirit, but within in the heart? Doth he not appear there by his light, and in his Power? What if God pleaſe to give forth a meaſure of his Eternal light in the heart of his choſen, to open that to them which they could never ſee before, & to bring them into a nearer unity with him than ever they knew before? may he not do it? Nay, is not ſuch a thing needful to help out of the deep & intricate Apoſtacy (wherein have been ſo many twiſtings and twinings of the ſubtil Serpent, about every ſtep or appearance of Reformation) and to gather the wandring ſheep, who were ſcattered up and down, and ſorely diſtreſſed, for want of the Tongue of the Learned to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to their eſtates and conditions? Have not every ſort bent the Scriptures, in the Reaſonings of their own Minds, and made them ſpeak according to their own

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hearts Lusts? And is not every one wise in his own Eyes, and strong in his own Tower and fenced City? Surely there was great need of an appearance of the Lord to shut out the wisdom of Man, and to help the Poor, the needy, the Fatherless, the weak Panting-Babes. And blessed be the Lord God, who hath appeared; and blessed are those who have seen his Light, and bowed at the feet of his living appearance, and felt the Vertue of his saving Arm, scattering their lusts and corruptions, yea, also raising up and bringing forth his pure seed in the fresh Power, Dominion, and Authority of his perfect Life, which reigneth in the hearts which the Lord hath Regenerated and Sanctified for evermore.

O my Friends, my Friends, that that eye might be once blinded in you, which hinders your sight of God, and the eye opened which beholds his glory, and also taketh pleasure in his lowest Appearance. The *Babe* alone hath the *Mysteries of the Kingdom* revealed to him (*the Wise and Prudent* are excluded: the birth after the flesh in every one must be famished and destroyed) and he alone can see in the Eternal Light, this Dispensation of *the everlasting Gospel* after the Apostacy, which the Lord hideth

from thoſe, who are wiſe in the Letter of the former diſpenſation of the ſame Goſpel, but cannot read it as it was given forth in the Spirit then, nor as it is now again held forth in the ſame Spirit and Power. O my Friends, This is the Truth to you, (wait on the Lord that ye may underſtand it from him) *Your right eye muſt be put out* (which will never ceaſe offending you, and cauſing you to ſtumble, ſo long as it is able to ſee) *and all your knowledge which ye hold out of the Life, become as droſs and dung to you, if ever ye taſte and come to enjoy the Excellency and Glory of this Appearance of God in his Eternal Spirit, who hath deſcended from on high into the hearts of his choſen, to prepare them for his Spiritual Temple, that he may dwell in them, and they in him. And he will dwell in them, and they ſhall dwell in him, to the full delight and ſatisfaction of their hearts, & to the confuſion of all thoſe, who remain deſpiſing and reproaching this his Glorious Appearance, and his people in whom he hath appeared.* The day is not far off, wherein this will be made manifeſt, wherein great bitterneſs and anguiſh of ſpirit will befall thoſe, who can only ſee the Glory afar off, but cannot Inherit it, being found in that nature and ſpirit which is ſeparated from it, and eternally ſhut out of it. Some

Some DIRECTIONS to the PANTING-SOUL, which hath been long Travelling in the Letter, but hath not yet been acquainted with the Power, &c.

Matth. 11. 28, 29, 30.

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easie, and my burden is light.

Some sweet Meditations sprang in my heart, concerning this portion of Scripture, with breathings of spirit for, and rowlings of bowels towards those that labour and are heavy laden, which I find drawings to communicate.

1. IN *the Gospel* (which is the power of God unto Salvation) *is the Souls rest*. It is the Doctrine of the Kingdom, wherein is Life, Joy, Peace, and everlasting rest to the Soul in God: The Law had the shaddow of the good things to come,

but under it was not the poſſeſſion of the good things themſelves, but only a labouring after them, and a mourning and load becauſe of the want of them: but in the Goſpel is the Subſtance, the Enjoyment; Life and Immortality is there brought to Light, and an entrance miniſtred into the everlaſting Kingdom, where they are felt, poſſeſſed and enjoyed. The kingdom of Heaven is at hand, ſaith the fore-runner: It is come, ſaith the Meſſiah: and in it there is righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the pure Spirit of Life.

2. *It is the will of the King of Saints, that his People Should enjoy the Reſt and Peace of his Goſpel.* He would not have them alwayes labouring and heavy laden, as under the Law: but he would have their Souls feel and enjoy the Eaſe, the Liberty, the Sweetneſs, the pure Power and eternal Reſt of his life. The Spirit of the Lord was upon him to preach glad Tidings to the Meek, liberty to the Captives, life to the Dead, the opening of the Priſon to the priſoner of Hope, the binding up of the broken-hearted, the pouring in of Oyl upon the Wounded: And he would have the ſouls of his People enjoy that which he came to bring them.

3. *Chriſt*

3. *Chriſt hath plainly chalked out the path of his reſt to every weary panting ſoul, which he that walketh in cannot miſs of.* He hath *caſt up, caſt up*, he hath *made the plain* in the Goſpel, ſo plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, yet keeping to the light of the Goſpel, cannot erre therein, or miſs of the bleſſed reſt thereof. How is it? Why, *come unto me; Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.* He that walketh in this path, cannot miſs of it: The reſt is at the end of it, nay the reſt is in it: *He that believeth entereth into the reſt.* The true Faith, the Faith which ſtands in the Power, and which is given to the birth which is born from above, is the ſubſtance of the reſt hoped for, and there is a true taſte and ſome enjoyment of it given to him that truly believeth.

4. *The reſt was once felt and enjoyed, when the Goſpel was known in Power.* Believers in the firſt day of the Goſpel, before the night overtook that glorious diſpenſation, found *Peace and Joy in believing*, yea they could *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes.* They felt the Power and the Life, which ſtood over all the powers of darkneſs, and brought good to them out of every affliction, and out of every temptation, and out

of every distress; so that they standing in the life, and in the power which had quickned them, and was present with them, they could *count it all joy when they fell into manifold Temptations*, knowing the advantage which would accrue to them thereby, and possessing their souls in the pure patience, till God wrought it out for them. *They had an Enterance minidred to them into the everlasting Kingdom: They received the Kingdom which could not be shaken, and in it had fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and in the eternal Light the blood ran in their vessels, which cleansed them, and kept them pure; and they sat down with Christ in the heavenly places, even every one in the particular mansion which God hath built in them by his Spirit. The fear of the living God was put in their hearts; The Spirit of the Lord was within them, and there his Law was writ, and read in the Spirit, and the Treasures of his Kingdom were opened by the key of* David *in the hand of the Spirit; and their souls had true satisfaction and rest in measure, and were travelling on towards the fulness.*

5. *There is no rest to the soul, to be enjoyed in the Gospel, from under the Yoke.* This stands Eternally. That which yokes down,

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that which would be at eaſe and liberty out of the Life, that is the ſouls true reſt, there is no other; and under the yoke it is enjoyed, and not otherwayes: Only, when that which is to be yoked down, is conſumed and deſtroyed, it is then no longer a yoke, but perfect liberty. But the ſame thing which is the liberty, is the yoke: And under the yoke, the ſweetneſs, the eaſe, the lightſomneſs, the ſafe poſſeſſion of the life is enjoyed. Mark this therefore diligently; The yoke is not one thing, and the liberty another, but one and the ſame. The Power of God, the life everlaſting, the pure light, the divine Nature is a yoke to the tranſgreſſing Nature; but it is the eaſe, the pleaſure, the reſt, the peace, the joy, the natural center of that which is born of God.

Now to the ſoul that hath felt breathings towards the Lord formerly, and in whom there are yet any true breathings left after his living preſence, and after the feeling of his eternal vertue in the heart, I have this to ſay: *Where art thou? art thou in thy ſouls reſt? doſt thou feel the vertue and power of the Goſpel? Doſt thou feel the eaſe which comes from the living Arm, to the heart which is joyned to it in the light of*

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the Goſpel? Is thy labouring for life in a good degree at an end? And doſt thou feel the life and power flowing in upon thee from the free Fountain? Is the load really taken off from thy back? Doſt thou find the captive redeemed and ſet free from the Power of ſin, and the captivity broken, and he which led thee captive from the Life, and from the eternal Power, now led captive by the Life, and by the redeeming Power, which is eternal? Haſt thou found this, or haſt thou miſſed of it? Let thine heart anſwer. Ah, do not imagine and talk away the reſt and ſalvation of thy ſoul. The Goſpel-ſtate is a ſtate of ſubſtance, a ſtate of enjoying the Life, a ſtate of feeling the preſence and power of the Lord in his pure holy Spirit, a ſtate of binding up, a ſtate of healing, a ſtate of knowing the Lord, and walking with him in the light of his own Spirit. It begins in a ſweet powerful touch of life, and there is a growth in the life (in the Power, in the divine Vertue, in the Reſt, Peace, and ſatisfaction of the Soul in God) to be adminiſtred and waited for daily. Now art thou here, in the living Power, in the divine Life, joyned to the ſpring of life, drawing water of life, out of the Well of life with joy? Or, art thou dry, dead, barren, ſapleſs,

ſapleſs, or at beſt but unſatisfiedly mourning after what thou wanteſt?

Well, ye that are dry, dead, barren, as it were without the living God, (that know not the ſhining of his Sun, nor the deſcending of his dews from on high on his tender plants, nor the care, diligence and circumſpection of the husbandman over his husbandry.) Oh wait for the quickning vertue, for the viſitations of the day-ſpring from on high, that ye may be quickned again to God, that ye may find his life viſiting you, his ſpirit breathing upon you, that the ſeed of *Jacob* may be raiſed in you, to travel out of this barren ſtate, even out of this land of darkneſs, and from under the ſhadow of Death, to the land where life lives and flouriſhes, and daily diſtributeth plentiful nouriſhment and refreſhment to all its off-ſpring, who are taught to wait for it, and to feed on it in the holy place, out of the ſight of the eye of the fleſhly wiſdom.

And ye who are ſtill gaſping after the living God, on whom the breathings of life ſtill abide, (who remain unſatisfied inwardly, for want of the preſence of the Lord, and whoſe hearts ſtill mourn and lament deeply after him) Oh conſider what

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is the matter, that ye have mourned ſo long, and ſought ſo long, and yet to this day are at a diſtance from the thing ye have mourned and ſought after.

Strait is the gate, narrow is the way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it. The way of unbelief is broad, yea the way of miſchief is broad alſo. It is eaſie for a man ſo to believe concerning Chriſt, or in Chriſt (as his heart may call it) as to miſs of the nature of the true Faith, and of the ſweet and bleſſed effects which accompany it. It is eaſie likewiſe to miſs the the yoke (to take up a wrong yoke in the ſelf-will, ſelf-wiſdom, ſelf-interpretation of Scriptures) or eaſie ſtarting aſide from the true yoke: but it is hard coming under the yoke of the life, and hard abiding under it. Again, it is eaſie miſ-learning: A man may ſo read, and ſo hear, as that he may be alwaies learning, and never come to the knowledge of the Truth, never come to the Truth as it is received and held in Jeſus; but may ſo get and hold the knowledge of the Truth, as man in his wiſdom may get and hold it from the Letter. And if a man thus miſs the way, how can he attain the end? If a man begin not in the true Faith, in the living Faith, how

can he attain the Rest which the true Faith alone leads to? If a man miss of the yoke, or abide not constantly under the yoke, how can he meet with the true ease and rest which is in it, and which it alone can administer? If a man learn not the Truth aright of the true Teacher, how can he ever reap the effects of the true knowledge? Ah poor hearts! it is not enough to have breathings after God, nor to be very diligent and industrious either in outward Ordinances, or inward exercises of Spirit, but the way of the Gospel must be cast up by God, and the Soul led into it by him, and daily preserved by him: and must walk in the path which is proper for it to walk in, or it may mourn and cry all its dayes, and never meet with that injoyment of God, and satisfaction in God, which it waits for, and cries after. It is one thing to mourn after a Gospel-state, but another thing to be brought into it by the Power. With my heart I own those that mourn after, and feel the want of God, where-ever they are: But this I know certainly, that they can never come to the enjoyment of him, but in that living path which the Scriptures testifie of to be in him who is the Life, and which his Spi-

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rit is now found manifestly leading into, blessed be his Name.

Quest. *But how may my poor soul, wh have long mourned, and groaned, and bee sick of love after my Beloved, but could neve attain to the satisfactory enjoyment of him come to walk in this path, that so I may mee with, and lie down in that Power of Life an Salvation, which the Gospel holds forth to th true believer, and which I have been lon sensible of the deep want of?*

Answ. Thou that wouldst enjoy thy Beloved, and feel the Rest of his Gospel, and walk in that Path which leads thereto, wait to learn of the Spirit these things following.

1. *Know what it is that is to walk in th path of Life, and indeed is alone capable o walking therein.* It is that which groans, that which mourns, that which is begotten of God in thee. The Path of Life is for the Seed of Life. The true knowledge of the Way, with the walking in the Way, is reserved for God's Child, for God's Traveller. Therefore keep in the Regeneration, keep in the Birth. Be no more than God hath made thee. Give over thine own willing, give over thy own running, give over thine own desiring to know or

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to be any thing, and ſink down to the Seed which God ſowes in the heart, and let that grow in thee, and be in thee, and breath in thee, and act in thee; and thou ſhalt find by ſweet experience that the Lord knows that, and loves and owns that, and will lead it to the inheritance of Life, which is its Portion. And as thou takeſt up the Croſs to thy ſelf, and ſuffereſt that to overſpread and become a yoke over thee, thou ſhalt become renewed, and enjoy Life and the Everlaſting Inheritance in that.

2. *Know in what Light it is to walk*, which is the Light of the Spirit. There the Child is begotten (not in Satan's Darkneſs, or higheſt Transformings into the likeneſs of Light, which is but Darkneſs; nor in the light of man's wiſdom, ſearching Knowledge or comprehenſion) and there it walks: in that Light it fetcheth every ſtep and motion towards the Land of Life. Therefore hold no knowledge out of the Spirit. If any knowledge concerning the things of God be held out of the freſhneſs of the Spirit, it preſently proves dead and unprofitable. The Spiritual *Iſrael* cannot travel without a Spiritual Light, which Light is Eternal & incomprehenſible, and cannot

cannot be held by man's ſpirit, but ſhineth freſh into the renewed Spirit every day, and ſo is dayly gathering it more and more inwards into it ſelf, comprehending it in it ſelf, and preſerving it in its own Purity, Clearneſs and Brightneſs. Oh! this is it hath undone many, even catching at Light from the Spirit, tranſplanting the Image of Divine things into the Earthly Principle, and there holding of them in the Earthly part, growing wiſe by them there, and making uſe of them from thence as man ſees good, and not ſeeing a neceſſity of depending on the Spirit for freſh Light and Life every day, to every ſpiritual motion. Thus the traveller ſoon comes to loſe the true path, and inſtead thereof travels on in a Road of his own wiſdoms forming: and ſo though he ſeems to himſelf to make a large Progreſs, yet makes no true Progreſs at all, but is exceedingly run out aſide in a by-way, all which ground he muſt traverſe back again, ere he can come to the Truth of his former State, or proceed in the true travel.

3. *Know and keep to the Power*, which alone began any true work in the heart, which alone alſo can preſerve it, and which alone can carry it on. Chriſt was made

made a Prieſt, *not after the Law of a carnal commandment, but after the Power of an endleſs life*: and every ſacrificer under him (which every true Believer is) is ſo made by the ſame Power. The Powers of Darkneſs are continually at hand, which nothing can ſtand its ground againſt (much leſs walk on ſafely) without being in that Power which is above them. The firſt coming to Chriſt muſt be in the Power of the Fathers drawing: and no believing afterwards is of the true nature, nor will avail the ſoul in its progreſs and travels towards Life, but what abides in, and goes forth in the ſame Power. So the taking up the yoke and drawing in it, muſt be by the Power of the new Life. And ſo muſt the diſciples learning be. As the Maſter teacheth in the Power of the Spirit, the things which alone can be ſeen with the new eye, heard with the new ear, and received into the new heart: ſo the Scholar muſt learn and receive his Leſſons of Life in the ſame Power. Let any Diſciple of Chriſt be from under the ſhadow of the Power, believe out of the Power, walk out of the Power, act out of the Power; he is from that wherein his life ſtands, and wherein alone is his preſervation, and ah, how liable is he then

to falls, bruiſes, ſnares and temptations of the enemy.

4. *Watch againſt the ſelfiſh Wiſdom*, in every ſtep of thy growth, and in every ſpiritual motion, that that come not between thee and thy Life; that that deceive thee not with a likeneſs, a ſhadow, making it appear more pleaſing to thy eye than the ſubſtance. Every ſtep of thy way it will be laying baits for thee, and it is eaſie for deceit to enter thee at any time, and for that wiſdom to get up in thee under an appearance of Spiritual wiſdom, unleſs the Lord tenderly and powerfully preſerve thee: and if it prevail, it will lead thee from the path of the true wiſdom; It will cozen thee with a falſe faith inſtead of the true faith, with falſe praying inſtead of the breathings of the true child, with diligence and zeal in thy falſe way, inſtead of the true zeal and diligence; yea, it will hurry thee on in the path of error, ſhutting that eye in thee which ſhould ſee, and hardening thy heart againſt thy boſom-friend. And being thus deceived, thou maiſt be as zealous in thy age and generation againſt the Truth, as the Jews were in theirs: and as certainly as they put Chriſt to death, and perſecuted his Apoſtles, though they cried

tried up the former Prophets; So certainly thou (under this deceit) canst not but act against the present dispensation and appearance of Christ's Spirit, and wouldst persecute either the Prophets, Apostles or Christ himself, were it their present day now so to appear as formerly they did.

5. *Let nothing judge in thee* (concerning thine own heart, or concerning others, or concerning any way or truth of God) *but only the begotten of God* in the heart. Let the Light in which thou art begotten to God, and which shines upon his begotten, be the onely Judge in thee, and then thou canst not erre in Judgement. Be not hasty, be not forward in Judgement, keep back to the Life, still waiting for the appearance and openings of the Life. A few steps fetched in the Life and Power of God are much safer and sweeter than an hasty progress in the hasty forward spirit.

Indeed this is the true Religion, to feel God beginning the work, and to wait on him for his carrying it on. The feeling of Gods Spirit beginning somewhat in the heart, the hearts waiting on him for more of his Spirit, and walking on with him in his Spirit, as he pleaseth to quicken, lead, draw and strengthen, this is the Spiritual

and true Religion: and there is no Duty or Ordinance of the Gospel out of the Spirit, but it is easie crying up, and observing the likeness of any of them out of the Spirit, into which observance a strange spirit easily enters, and then that which was of God in the heart, soon withers, and a contrary building is raised, and the state of the heart changed. Oh wait on the Lord, that he may give you to understand these things: for the Apostacy from God is very deep, and more provoking among the Protestants than among the Papists, yea most of all provoking, where it is most inward and Spiritual.

Quest. *But how may I know and keep to the begotten of God, and to the Light and Power of the Lord, and keep down the fleshly wisdom and comprehension concerning the things of God?*

Answ. When God begets life in the heart, there is the savour of it in thy vessel, and a secret living warmth and vertue, which the heart in some measure feels, whereby it is known. Lye low in the fear of the most high, that this leaven may grow and increase in thee. This is the leaven of the Kingdom, this is it which must change thy heart and nature, and make thy ves-

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ſel (which perhaps hath been long and much corrupted) fit to receive the treaſure of the Kingdom. Now while the ſavour is upon thee, while the vertue of the Life is freſh in thee, thou findeſt ſome ſtrength towards God, with ſome little taſte and diſcerning of the things of his Kingdom: know thy weakneſs, and go not beyond thy meaſure, but in what thou haſt received bow before the Fulneſs, worſhip God in that, and be patient in what he exerciſes thee withal, waiting for more from him. And when the night comes upon thee, and thou perhaps art at a loſs, miſſing the ſavour and preſence of the Life, and not knowing how to come by it again; Be patient and ſtill and thou wilt find breathings after a freſh viſitation, and a meek, humble, broken ſpirit before the Lord. Thou wilt ſee thou canſt do nothing to recover his preſence again, nay thou canſt not ſo much as wait for him, or breath after him without his help: but he is nigh to the poor, nigh to the broken, nigh to the diſtreſſed, nigh to the helpleſs. Oh do not with thy fleſhly cryes and roarings think to awaken thy Beloved before his ſeaſon; but in the night of diſtreſs, feel after ſomewhat which may quiet and ſtay

thy heart till the next ſpringing of the day. The Sun will ariſe, which will ſcatter the clouds; and he is near thee who will give thee to hope that thou ſhalt yet ſee God, and find again the quickenings and leadings of his Spirit. And in the day of his Power thou wilt find ſtrength to walk with him: yea in the day of thy weakneſs his grace will be ſufficient for thee. And he will nurture thee up in his life by his pure ſpirit, cauſing thee to grow under his ſhadow: and he will be teaching thee to live, and to ſpeak, and to move and act from the Principle and within the compaſs of his Life and Light eternal. Only be not wiſe to catch the notions of things into the earthly part, where the moth can corrupt, and where the thief can break through and ſteal: but know the divine treaſury, where all the things of Life are treaſured up by the Spirit, and handed forth to the living Child with freſh Life, according to its need of them. And thus thy heart being kept cloſe to God, and thy Spiritual ſences continually exerciſed about the things of God, it will be eaſie to thee to know the Shepherds voice, and to diſtinguiſh the ſound of the Spirit in thine own heart.

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And that which tries ſpirits and motions in thine own heart, will alſo give thee the diſcerning of Truth and Error abroad, even of the Spirit of God, and the ſpirit of Satan in others, ſo that thou wilt be able to try not only words, but Spirits, becoming acquainted with the Anointing, which ſavours all things and will give thee to judge, not by the Words but by the Power: For thou thy ſelf being in the Power, in the Anointing, in the Savour, it will become natural to thee to feel, to taſte, to know and unite with what is one with thy Life, what comes from the ſame ſpirit in others, and to turn from the contrary. And thus thy Life, thy Growth, thy Path will be ſweet, ſafe, clear, certain, demonſtrative in the Spirit, and paſt all reaſonings of fleſh and blood, either in thy ſelf or others. The beginning of Life Eternal is in an higher Principle, than man can come at. Man's wiſdom and knowledge of the things of God, is but bruitiſh before it. As thou comeſt into that Principle, abideſt and groweſt in that Principle, thou art beyond man's judgement, and art able to judge man, and fathom his whole courſe as with a ſpan, but art quite out of his reach

in the loweſt of thy motions, thoughts or actions, I mean ſuch as flow from and are comprehended in the Life.

Iſaac Penington

The Younger.

Some *Queſtions* and *Anſwers* ſhewing Man his Duty, *&c.*

The PREFACE.

THe goodneſs of God endureth for ever. And though his creature Man (who ſhould have been ſubject and obedient to him) hath ſinned againſt him, and by motions and inclinations of his own will and wiſdom (out of the Principle of his pure Life, which was to have been his Guide and Governour) hath fallen ſhort of his glory: Yet he ſtill pleaſeth to viſit his poor loſt creature with loving-kindneſs and mercy, and with various diſpenſations of his life, according to his pleaſure. What man

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is there, that hath not received a ſoul from the breath of the Almighty? And what ſoul is it, that hath not ſome viſitations of life from that living breath? The bowels of Eternity moſt naturally rowle towards all its off-ſpring, who ſeeketh the gathering of them all in the variety, and according to the limitations of his Will, in his pure Wiſdom.

There is a Current or Stream of Life before the Promiſe is known, which ſecretly viſits all, diſcovering the darkneſs in ſome meaſure unto all, and drawing from it. And happy is he, who falls in with, and follows the leadings of the Almighty here: for then he cannot abide in the darkneſs, but (ſtill according to the need of his condition) will meet with a true guide out of it, and with the true Power which redeemeth and delivereth from it. For as the promiſe made to Adam, *had relation to all his poſterity: ſo whoever is viſited with any Light by virtue of the Promiſe, that Light will lead him to the promiſe, and he (in the obedience thereof) will meet with the ſweetneſs and virtue of the promiſe. So that the loweſt diſpenſation of God (the Creature being exerciſed therein, feeling the want of God's Power, and drawn to depend upon him for mercy and ſtrength) will lead fallen man back again to his Maker, by the virtue which flows into man*

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from the promise, though never so secretly and hiddenly. For it is not the distinct knowledge of the promise (though that is a very great advantage) but the virtue flowing from the promise, which saves. Man being touched by that virtue, and by the touch thereof quickened towards God, and in that virtue which comes from the redeeming mercy, cleaving to his Maker, and hoping in his tender bowels, and feeling the weakness, insufficiency and corruption of his own will and understanding, and so going forth from himself towards the Spring which quickened him: Here is Christ known in spirit, received in spirit, believed and relied on in spirit, and his living virtue already felt and further waited for. And can this man, thus walking, thus believing, thus obeying, thus cleaving to the Principle which gives life, thus receiving virtue from it, and growing up (in that virtue) out of the self-hood into it, I say, Can this man miss of eternal life which runs along in all the streamings forth of this living virtue?

But O how sweet is the stream of life in the sensible manifestation of the promise! He who feels the Covenant in Christ, and life streaming into his heart through the Covenant; and the seal of Eternal Peace to his soul, and that he shall never be left nor forsaken by the Foun-

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tain of Mercy, but all that ever befals him, ſhall conduce towards the working out of the perfect redemption and ſalvation of his ſoul: This is a precious ſtate indeed; and this is the ſtate, which the feeling of the faith, and the living obedience in the ſpirit leads to. Happy are they that walk in the path thereof, who content not themſelves with man's knowledge of Chriſt, with man's belief of the things written concerning him, with man's obedience to the Precepts left on Record by the Apoſtles; but whoſe living ſoul cannot be ſatisfied, without the feeling and preſſing after Chriſt the life, and without a true engrafting into him in ſpirit, through the living Word or Teſtimony of life received into, and believed on in the heart.

And how ſweet alſo is the Miniſtration of the Law, which comes from the Promiſe, and is managed to the ſoul by the hand of the Mediator! How ſweet is it to ſee the creature fall daily! To find ones own ſtrength to believe, to obey, to ſuffer, to abide with Chriſt, to wait on Chriſt, to hope for Chriſt, daily battered and brought to nothing, and no life left, but what iſſues from the Spring, and is alone maintained by the free Current thereof into the heart daily! Here the ſtroke of the Law is received, by degrees unto perfect death. Here are the openings of the pure Propheſies in the

Spirit

Spirit concerning a new Kingdom, a new Birth, a new Heir, a new Life. Here is the Ax laid to the root of the Tree, and that cut down in the heart which is not to live, and which hinders the Heir from his Inheritance. Here is the vail of tears, which tears ſpring from the life, whoſe virtue waſheth away the corruptible day by day. Here is the houſe of Mourning, and that ſtate of darkneſs entred into, which ſwallows up all the joy of the dark earthly ſpirit, and conſumes its nature. Here the light of life is ſown, and through theſe exerciſes it ſprings up; and after the paſſing away of this Miniſtration, breaks forth in ſtrength upon that ſoul, which hath been throughly exerciſed herein.

I deſire the good of all mankind, waiting for the ſwallowing up of the diſpenſations of death, and the breaking forth of life upon them in the ſeaſons thereof, according to the good pleaſure of him whoſe gift life is, and whoſe are all the diſpenſations of it. And in that love, through the openings and drawings of life in me, have I writ what follows: not to upbraid or ſtrike at any, but to be an help unto ſuch, as the Lord ſhall pleaſe to make it ſerviceable to. Wait on the Lord, eye him, read in fear, praying to be touched by, and gathered into that, which gives the feeling of the weight

weight of truth. O that mens ſouls were awakned, that they might know what it is to periſh from God, and what to be ſaved by him. The proper portion of man's ſoul is the Fountain of Eternal Life, and he can never be happy (nor in true reſt, peace or joy) while ſeparated from it. Let him who is not bruitiſh in underſtanding, and whoſe ſoul is not wholly dead God-wards, conſider this.

Queſt. *WHat is the proper work of man here in this world?*

Anſ. To fear God, and keep his Commandments. This is all that God requires of him, and this is enough to make him happy.

Queſt. *What is God?*

Anſ. The Fountain of Beings and Natures, the inward Subſtance of all that appears, who createth, upholdeth, conſumeth and bringeth to nothing as he pleaſeth.

Queſt. *How may I know that there is a God?*

Anſ. By ſinking down into the Principle of his own life, wherein he revealeth himſelf to the creature. There the ſoul receiveth ſuch taſtes and knowledge of him, as cannot be queſtioned by him that abideth there.

Queſt. *What is it to fear this God?*

Anſ. The ſpirit and ſoul of the creature ſtanding in awe of his Nature, and waiting to be kept in due ſubjection thereto, this is to fear him. And this is the proper means of

of preſerving the Spirit of the creature right in its motions towards him, attendance upon him, and expectations from him.

Queſt. *What are his Commandments?*

Anſ. They are ſuch as are either general to all mankind, common to ſome ſorts of men, or proper to particular perſons.

Queſt. *What are thoſe which are general to all mankind?*

Anſ. They are very many, but may all be referred to thoſe two heads, to wit, *To love God above all, and ones neighbour as ones ſelf*, even ſo in every reſpect doing to him as one would be done to by him in the like caſe.

Queſt. *How may man perform this?*

Anſ. Onely by receiving a principle of life from God, and keeping cloſe thereto.

Queſt. *How may a man come by a Principle of life from God?*

Anſ. God is near to every man with the breath of his life, breathing upon him at times according to his pleaſure, which man's ſpirit opening unto, and drinking in, it becometh a Seed or Principle of Life in him, overſpreading and leavening him up to eternal life?

Queſt.

Queſt. *What hinders man from receiving this Principle of Life, and from keeping cloſe thereto?*

Anſ. A fleſhly Principle, which is contrary to the knowledge, fear and obedience of the Lord, and to all that ſprings from the Principle and Power of his Life.

Queſt. *How comes this fleſhly Principle to be found in man?*

Anſ. It was ſown there by the enemy of mans ſoul, man giving him entrance into his ſpirit, by hearkening to his ſuggeſtions and allurements.

Queſt. *What help hath man againſt this fleſhly Principle?*

Anſ. None of himſelf: but being touched freely by the other Principle, and taſting thereof, he is to wait on God's mercy and grace, for the manifeſtation of his light and power, to diſcover to him the evil nature and courſe of his own heart, and to cut down the corrupt deſires, reaſonings and imaginations thereof?

Queſt. *In what way is this effected upon the heart?*

Anſ. In the hearts belief of this Principle, and in its obedience thereto.

Queſt. *How may may a man come to believe in this Principle?*

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Anſ. In feeling its nature, in waiting to feel ſomewhat begotten by it: in this its light ſprings, its life ſprings, its love ſprings, its hidden power appears, and its preſerving wiſdom and goodneſs is made manifeſt to the ſoul that clings to it in the living ſence, which its preſence and appearance begets in the ſoul.

Queſt. *How may a man come to obey this Principle?*

Anſ. In the Faith, in the eying of it, in the clinging to it, the ſtrength iſſues from it into the creature, which maketh it able to perform all that it calleth for.

Queſt. *How come perſons to be ſo weak, and to complain ſo much for want of power, who feel a true beginning of life, and earneſt breathings after God?*

Anſ. From the enemies interpoſing of reaſons between them and their Faith. The darkneſs, the principle of unbelief lies near, and is ſtill raiſing mud (as much as poſſible) between the Principle of Life and the ſoul: and ſo far as it can come between, it diſturbeth both the motions of the ſoul towards its ſpring or principle of life, and alſo the ſprings clear bubling up in, and running through the ſoul.

Queſt. *What is to be done in this caſe?*

Anſ. The ſoul is to wait God's ſeaſons of deliverance from theſe, and to hope for an hidden ſupport from his Grace, while the viſitations and leadings of his life are not made manifeſt.

Queſt. *What ground is there for this hope?*

Anſ. There is ground of hope for the creature in God's goodneſs, who naturally loveth and ſeeketh after the ſouls which he hath made, and doth not readily nor eaſily caſt off in any of his diſpenſations. Beſides, where he hath begotten ſomewhat, and where the bent of the heart is towards him, and the deſire after his pure life and ſpirit (above all things) kindled; there hath he laid the foundation of a building, which (though at preſent it may lie in the duſt, and under heaps of ruines) he cannot forget.

Queſt. *Are there other Commands beſides theſe, common to ſome ſorts of men?*

Anſ. Yes, according to that diſpenſation of life and mercy unto which they are called, and into which they are admitted by the love and kindneſs of God, which overſpreadeth all his works, and who forgetteth not his creatures in their eſtate of ſeparation and alienation from him.

Queſt.

Queſt. *Are there then more diſpenſations of life and mercy than one?*

Anſ. Yes, For though the life and mercy in it ſelf is but one, yet it hath ſeveral waies of ſeeking out after, and gathering into it ſelf the loſt ſons of *Adam*.

Queſt. *What have been the chief waies of diſpenſing the Light of Life towards mankind?*

Anſ. Firſt, By a ſecret ſhining into their hearts. Thus the ſoul of the Lord holdeth forth ſome beams of his eternal Light to all mankind, according to his pleaſure, at ſome time or other viſiting the darkeſt corners of the earth, and making ſome way therein for the ſcattering of that darkneſs which ſeparates the ſoul from the Light of Life, and from the ſweet preſence and enjoyments of its Creator, which naturally flows into every ſoul in its believing and obeying of that Light.

Queſt. *Were ever any thus gathered to the Lord?*

Anſ. The Lord is able to make any Diſpenſation of his life effectual. And as many of the Jews were not gathered by the Law: ſo, many of the Gentiles might be gathered without the Law.

Queſt. *But the Law gave the knowledge of the Meſſiah to come through faith, in whom was the remiſsion of ſins known, and ſtrength againſt ſin?*

Anſ. The knowledge of Chriſt runs along in all the Diſpenſations of the Eternal Light. The light cometh from him, and it manifeſts him in ſpirit, and the remiſſion by his blood is ſpiritually known in the ſouls feeling the living virtue thereof. The Law and the Goſpel are both known in ſpirit, where ever the eternal Light viſiteth and is received.

Q. *What are the Commands common to thoſe?*

Anſ. They are known to thoſe who are thus gathered, who in the life thus diſpenſed feel the leadings of it, and in its Light are ſenſible of thoſe requirings, which univerſally ſtream forth from it among thoſe who are thus gathered.

Queſt. *What other way of diſpenſing the Light of Life hath there been?*

Anſ. That of the promiſe to the Fathers, which was before the Law, wherein they ſaw the day of the Meſſiah, and were glad. This was a glorious Diſpenſation, in which they taſted the Son-ſhip, and felt power to walk with God, and faith to truſt him in his leadings, and were tranſlated by

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him (in a ſweet and precious degree) into the meaſure of his Life, which made them pilgrims and ſtrangers in this World, and ſteered their ſpirits towards another Countrey.

Queſt. *What were the Commands common to theſe?*

Anſ. They were ſeen by them in the ſtreamings forth of that Diſpenſation of Life among them, a taſte whereof the quickned ſpirit may have, in reading the words concerning them up and down the Scriptures.

Queſt. *What further diſpenſation of life hath there been?*

Anſw. That of the Law to the *Jews.*

Queſt. *Was that a Miniſtration of life? was it not rather a Miniſtration of death and condemnation?*

Anſ. It proved ſo in its effect through the weakneſs of their ſtate; but its natural tendency and proper effect, in caſe of obedience thereto, was life. And alſo in the midſt of its adminiſtring death and condemnation, it pointed to him who was the juſtification and the life: inſomuch as the Law was kind to them in ſlaying them, and ſerviceable to the life of ſuch ſouls, as kindly received the ſtroke thereof, and fled to the hope ſet before them.

Qu. *What were the common Laws amongst these?*

Anſ. They are to be read in the writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets, wherein God's Law and Teſtimonies were abundantly given forth to that people.

Qu. *Have there been yet any further Diſpenſations of life?*

Anſ. Yes, that of the Goſpel, before the Apoſtacy and falling away from the living truth and power of the ſpirit, into man's wiſdom, inventions and imitations.

Queſt. *What were the Laws common to theſe?*

Anſ. They may be read in the Writings of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, where the Record of this Miniſtration is to be found.

Queſt. *What hath the Miniſtration of Life been ſince the Apoſtles dayes?*

Anſ. Very low, very weak, very dark, very hidden, exceedingly retired. Yet true Children have been begotten, and food hath been handed to them from the Father, and they have been nouriſhed up in the Faith, and have kept the Commandments of their day, and dyed in the Faith: And thoſe who have thus been led

led and preſerved, their ſouls are at reſt, and in the peace of God. But theſe have not been in any particular diſtinct gathering, and clear ſeparation out of the world, but ſcattered up and down in ſeveral miſtaken forms, and loaded with the inventions of the earthly wiſdom, and with the bondage and weight of corruption, not knowing that clearneſs of ſpirit, and victory over ſin, by the preſence of the Life, which was felt and enjoyed by the Chriſtians before the Apoſtacy.

Queſt. *Had theſe any common Commandments?*

Anſ. Not ſo diſtinctly as the former: for they lying in an heap of Confuſion, in a Wilderneſs or Chaos, ſcattered in the Myſts and Fogs of Antichriſtian darkneſs one from another, had not ſuch common beams of Light, or clear ſtreams of life running among them, as thoſe that had a more diſtinct gathering. Yet ſome teſtimony for God and againſt the corruption of the times, according to what was in their day and age to be teſtified for and againſt, did run among every ſort (of ſuch as were true-hearted) in ſome kind or other. And for this they were hated and perſecuted by men (even by

ſuch as were formal, and of another ſpirit) and alſo dearly tendered and beloved of the Lord.

Qu. *Hath there been any further dispensation of life ſince the Apoſtacy?*

Anſ. There is another begun, whoſe glory is to exceed the former, after the darkneſs (which overſpread and clouded the beauty of the former) is expelled by the growing brightneſs of this appearance.

Qu. *How may it appear that there is another?*

Anſ. There is no knowing this diſpenſation, but by being gathered into the Light of it. Wiſdom hath been alone juſtified of her Children in former ages, and ſhe can be juſtified by none elſe, in her appearance in this age.

Qu. *What is the difference of this from the former?*

Anſ. It is more inward, more retired, more cloſely depending upon the principle of Life in the Spirit, than the former.

Qu. *Is it then the ſame in ſubſtance?*

Anſ. Yes, the very ſame. The very ſame truth of Chriſt Jeſus, the very ſame building of God in the ſpirit, the very ſame Church is to be again brought forth: but

in

in greater glory, that being now to be left out whereby the Enemy then entered, and alſo degrees of beauty, ſtrength and perfection, being to be added.

Qu. *But ſurely a greater glory than that in the Apoſtles dayes is not to be expected; nay it is not the belief of many that ever that ſhall be reſtored?*

Anſ. This ariſeth from the unbelief, and want of the ſight of the thing by the right eye in the true Light. For the travel of the Eternal Spirit in its Diſpenſations, is towards perfection: and after the darkneſs of Antichriſt, the brightneſs of the Light of Life is to ſhine more clear than ever, as is abundantly teſtified in the Scriptures (eſpecially in the Book of the *Revelations*) and alſo ſeen by many in the clear openings of the ſame Eternal Spirit.

Qu. *Are there any common Commands given forth in this Diſpenſation?*

Anſ. Yes, unto all who are gathered into the Spirit of it. They all feel the ſame common commands unto ſeveral things, according to the nature and drift of this Diſpenſation.

Qu. *What are they?*

Anſ. They are many, and concern many things (to wit, their meetings to wor-

ſhip

ſhip and wait on the Lord, who hath viſited and gathered them, together with their way of worſhipping, as alſo their converſe and converſation amongſt men, &c.) which are not eaſily ſpecified: neither indeed are they fit to be held forth to man's diſputing wiſdom, but to be waited for in the Spirit, where the light of them is evident, and the ſtrength to perform them received and held.

Queſt. *But how may men know that theſe are true Commands of the Lord, and not imaginations or opinions of their own?*

Anſ. When the Principle of Life is known, and that which God hath begotten, felt in the heart; the diſtinction between what God opens and requires there, and what ſprings up in mans wiſdom, reaſon and imagination is very manifeſt.

Qu. *Are there particular Commands to particular perſons, beſides theſe?*

Anſ. As every heart hath its own particular ſtate, which is onely fully known to the Spirit of the Lord, who is the Leader of the ſoul out of its darkneſs and captivity, and the Exerciſer of it in what he judgeth proper to its preſent ſtate: ſo the Lord giveth out particular Commands as he pleaſeth, either to do or forbear ſuch a thing, as

as he judgeth it neceſſary for the ſoul.

Qu. *How may theſe be known?*

Anſ. By coming into acquaintance with the Lord, and the movings and voice of his Spirit. Firſt, the quickenings of the Spirit of the Lord are to be received into the heart: then the eye fixed, in that which is quickened, on him that quickened it, and all the inward ſences waiting upon him, and exercited towards him Thus the ſheep come to know the voice of the Shepherd, and to follow his leadings into the Paſtures of Life, and out of the pathes and feedings of Death, and is drawn on by him towards any thing, or ſtopt by him from any thing at his pleaſure.

O that the ſons of men knew their God, and were gathered into any living diſpenſation by him wherein they might have the true ſence and ſeeking of him. O that mens ſouls were awakened to feel the want of the breath of life from whence they came. O that the Seed of Iſrael were redeemed by their God, that their glory and beauty in his pure life might awaken the Nations. O God, haſten thy work in the world: bring the glory and wiſdom of man into contempt, and bring forth thine own glory and wiſdom in its pure brightneſs.

Some

Some Queſtions and Anſwers concerning the ſeed of Iſrael *and the true Church.*

Queſt. WHo *are the Seed of* Iſrael?

Anſ. They who are begotten of the Spirit and Nature of the Eternal Father and Fountain of Life, out of the ſpirit and nature of this world.

Qu. Are there ſuch a ſeed in the earth?

Anſ. Yea, and have alwayes been, who have ſtill been the bleſſing of this world though conſtantly hated and perſecuted by it.

Qu. Why are they hated by the world?

Anſ. Becauſe they are not of the World but faithful Witneſſes againſt it, teſtifying unto it, that its wayes are evil, and its end miſery.

Qu. Why do they thus teſtifie?

Anſ. It is their nature, and God calleth them thereunto. He hath ſet up his Light in their hearts, to ſhine forth in the World, and ſcatter the darkneſs.

Queſt. *How do they ſcatter the darkneſs? not the darkneſs rather ſcatter them?*

Anſ. The darkneſs doth indeed often prevail againſt them outwardly, hunting and ſcattering them up and down upon the face of the earth: but they ſtill prevail inwardly, in the teſtimony of mens Conſciences, over the darkneſs, who at one time or other, are generally made to acknowledge in the ſecrets of their hearts, that they are of God.

Qu. *Why doth the Lord ſuffer it to be thus, that that which is precious, and of him, ſhould be trodden under foot by that which is not of him?*

Anſ. The Lord hath his ſeaſons for the diſcovery of all things. He hath given the Kingdom of Darkneſs its time and power to reign over the Juſt, and to keep the holy Seed in bondage and captivity; and he hath alſo appointed his ſuffering Seed its ſeaſon of ſuffering in all ages and generations. And by theſe, & through theſe the nature of each is diſcovered, their ends, and their ſuitableneſs to their ends.

Qu. *But ſhall his holy Seed alwayes ſuffer in this world?*

Anſ. Nay, not ſo: for the Lord hath a day to raiſe the Juſt into dominion

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on

on over the unjuſt, even here in this world?

Qu. *When ſhall this be?*

Anſ. When the malice and perſecutions of the Enemies of the pure Seed are filled up, and the meaſure of its ſufferings finiſhed.

Qu. *Where are this Seed?*

Anſ. They are (as yet, for the generality) ſcattered up and down under the face of the whole Heaven. Not to be found in a viſible body gathered together, but ſcattered up and down, here a few, and there a few; here one, and there another.

Qu. *Were they then once in a body?*

Anſ. Yea, they were once embodied: for after God had caſt off the natural Seed, the *Jews*, he gathered the ſpiritual Seed into a Body, ſetting them as a City on a Hill, and making them the Light of the world.

Qu. *How came they afterwards to be ſcattered.*

Anſ. The Dragon hath done this, God ſuffering him many wayes to aſſault this Building, and ſo far at length to prevail over it, even to ſcatter his Church out of her built ſtate, into a Wilderneſs ſtate, where no eye can diſcern her any more, but

but that which is of God. (Wait to read *Rev.* 12. in the Light of that Spirit which wrote it.)

Queſt. *Why did God ſuffer the Dragon to prevail over ſo precious and glorious a Building?*

Anſ. Becauſe there was ſomewhat of the power of darkneſs neceſſary to be made manifeſt, which could not be otherwiſe ſo made manifeſt, as by this its prevailing: and alſo that he might ſhew the neceſſity of, and make way for the bringing forth of that, over which the power of darkneſs cannot prevail.

Qu. *Is there then ſuch a thing to be brought forth?*

Anſ. Yea, There is a Church, there is a Spiritual building againſt which the Gates of Hell can never prevail, which is ſo united to the Rock, as the Powers of darkneſs can by no means come between the Rock and it.

Qu. *Is this Church, and the Church in the Apoſtles dayes different, or the ſame?*

Anſ. This Church hath been in all ages, but a more full and perfect bringing forth in the Apoſtles dayes, than in any age before: yet not ſuch a bringing forth outwardly, as might not be driven back.

back. And therefore did the Lord suffer it to be assaulted and prevailed over, in that wherein it was weak through the outwardness of it, that (after many dayes) he might manifest his strength in bringing it forth more perfectly.

Qu. *Where hath this Church been these many Ages, since the Dragons sore assault and overcoming it, as to its outwardness?*

Ans. In the Wilderness, *Rev.* 12.

Qu. *What Wilderness? any visible, outward Wilderness?*

Ans. It is a parable, representing the scattered state of the Seed, after God's presence was withdrawn from the visible building, and it laid waste as to his life, and the appearances of his Spirit, and the Dragon got into, and seated in the form, (2 *Thess.* 2. 4.) then the seed and appearances of God were to be found elsewhere, and not in those buildings.

Qu. *How were those Churches, or Buildings in the Apostles dayes laid waste?*

Ans. The presence of the Life and Power makes the form living: and no longer is it, or can it be so, than the Life and Power remains with it. Now they not abiding in the Life and in the Power (the

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Apostacy coming, spoken of 2 *Thess.* 2. 3.) the Life and the Power also withdrew from them, and left them the dead form, into which the Prince of Death immediately enters: and so that which was a Church unto God, while the life abode there, and they in the life, becomes a Synagogue of Satan, he entering into the dead form, and being worshipped there in the dead form. So that it is not any outward gathering or profession that makes a Church under the New Testament, but only the life and power. That gathering which is in the Life and Power, is a true Church: that which is not, is a Synagogue of Satan, let them profess what they will. For the living God dwells in living Temples onely, and the Prince of Death dwells in all the territories of death.

Quest. *According to this Rule there are, or have been, few true Churches of God in the World, since the dayes of the Apostles?*

Ans. The true Church hath been in a Wilderness-state since the dayes of the Apostles. A scattered Seed have her Children been, and she a Widow forsaken, God providing a place for the inward part of

his Building, and giving up the outward part to the formal spirit, to the possession of the powers of Darkness. Read *Rev.* 11. 1, 2. The Lord by the withdrawing of his Spirit took down his own Building, gave up the outward Court to the Gentiles, removed the inward Temple, Altar and Worshippers into the Wilderness. And since that time, men have built many Buildings, in the imitation of that which God built (every sort according to their skill, and reasonings of their Wisdom about the thing) but they are not the same Building. But the true Building, the true Church is reproached by all these Builders, and not known to be the thing, because hid from their eye.

Qu. *When shall this true Church appear again?*

Ans. When God, who gave her the wings of an Eagle to flye into the Wilderness, bringeth her the same Wings again, to flye out. Then shall she come forth cloathed with the Sun again, and with the Moon under her feet, and with her Crown of Stars.

Qu. *How may it appear, that those present Buildings which are to be found in the world, are not true Churches?*

Ans.

Anſ. Becauſe they are built by men, and their ſtrength ſtands not in the demonſtration and power of the Spirit, but in the wiſdom and power of man. Take away that, they ſoon crumble and molder of themſelves. Beſides, they are not cloathed with the Sun, have not the Moon under their feet, nor know not the travel to bring forth the Man-child, which the true Church knows, even in the Wilderneſs.

Qu. Why do men keep up ſuch Buildings, and not rather mourn after the true Building of God, which is built and preſerved in the light and power of his Spirit?

Anſ. Antichriſt's time is not yet fully ended, nor the myſts wherewith he blinds mens eyes ſcattered, nor the Cup of his Fornications (which makes every one drunk and beſotted, as to the ſight and knowledge of the true Church which drinks of it) taken from mens lips.

Qu. How may I know the true Church?

Anſ. By being born of God's Spirit, and looking with that eye which he gives to thoſe whom he begets, in that Light of Life which ſhineth from his preſence: Here his holy Church and true Spouſe is diſcerned and diſtinguiſhed from all falſe

resemblances and vain pretenders.

Qu. *Are there then many resemblances of the true Church, and pretenders to be such, which are not so indeed?*

Ans. Yes, There is the Mother of Harlots, *Revel.* 17. 5. and her many daughters; all which pretend to be the true Churches of Christ, but want that life in themselves, and that Union in Spirit with him, which alone can make such.

Qu. *What makes a true Church?*

Ans. That alone which makes a spiritual body, and which unites that body to the Head. There must be a true nature, and the union of that nature to the Head, or there cannot be a Marriage in spirit to the Lamb. Now the true Church is Christ's Spouse, *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh*; as truly of the seed of *Abraham* after the spirit, as the *Jews* were after the flesh. And as he that saith he is a *Jew*, but wanteth the true circumcision of the heart and spirit, doth but lye, and is not indeed so. So they that say they are a Church, but want the nature of the Church, they also lye, and are not a true gathering of Christians out of the world, but a Synagogue of Satan, still abiding and worshipping in the spirit of the world, (*Rev.* 2. 9. & ch. 3. 9.)

Qu.

Qu. *May not the true Church be known by outward visible marks, as most persons describe and seek to find and distinguish her by?*

Ans. No, not possibly in her Wilderness-state nor hardly in her built-state.

Quest. *Why not possibly in her Wilderness-state?*

Ans. Because there she is stripped of them, and the Harlots or false Churches are cloathed with them. Mark the thing: In the very Apostles dayes, the false Ministers and false Christians got into the form, and denied the power, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. Now after a season God leaves the form to them (*Revel.* 11. 2.) gathering his Church out of that appearance into the hidden power. Here is the Wilderness into which the Church fled: the Life, the Power, which before appeared in the form, being withdrawn and separated from the form, and the living Seed gathered into it, and worshipping in it. And who can now find the Church, or learn the Worship? Here the eye of the Seed is tried, and the Wisdom of the Spirit of the true Disciple. And here, ever since, all the World have been jangling about the Form, while the true Witnesses have been mourning after

the Power, testifying concerning the Power, and enjoying what was to be given forth of it, in the present way of its dispensation in the Wilderness.

Quest. *Why hardly in her built-state?*

Ans. Because even then such variety of resemblances and likenesses of the true Church may be built, as cannot be distinguished from the true it self by any outward marks. There were in the Apostles daies false Apostles, false Ministers and false Churches; which though they appeared as the Apostles of Christ, as the Ministers of Righteousness, as the Churches of Christ; yet they were not so, but *false Apostles, deceitful workers,* and *Synagogues of Satan.* Now they which intend to deceive, appear most exactly in the Form, and with the outward Marks, if need require: and that which is true and substantial, is not so regardful of the outward form, but minds the inward life, truth and substance. He therefore that judges by the form and outward marks, cannot but judge that to be the true Spouse which appears most in the form, and with the outward marks, and so is very liable to be deceived and err, by judging some of the false Churches to be true, and the true to be false.

Qu.

Qu. *What am I to do when I know the true Church?*

Anſ. To wait in that, which gives to be a Member of it, and gives true Union with it, whether it be in its Wilderneſs-ſtate, or in its built-ſtate. For the ſame Spirit which begets the child in the true life, will alſo lead to the Church: and in that Wiſdom which is from above, the true Church will never be miſſed of; but in the earthly reaſonings and gueſſings of mans wiſdom, God's Church, (or New-Teſtament-building in the power of his Spirit) is eaſily miſſed. And he that miſſeth of this, and is out of the pale of it, is it poſſible he ſhould meet with the true ſalvation? He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear; and he that hath but ſo much as the heart of a man, let him conſider: For the thing is of great weight, and of deep concernment to the ſoul.

Well, have but patience a while, and the true Church (which God's Spirit builds) ſhall be known, and all the falſe Churches of mens building ſhall be known alſo. And that which God hath built, ſhall have the power from God, and the praiſe among men; and all the

Babyloniſh buildings, of mans confuſed ſpirit, and inconſiſtent wiſdom, ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, and become a ſtink in all Noſtrils. For ſtrong is the Lord God of Heaven and Earth, who is confounding *Babylon* in all her gaudy attire, and glorious appearances, and raiſing up his *Sion* out of the duſt. *Amen. Halelujah.*

Some

Some further Queſtions and Anſwers concerning the Seed of Iſrael.

Queſt. *OUt of what womb doth the Seed of* Iſrael *ſpring?*

Anſw. Out of the Nature of Eternal Life, out of the Boſom of Eternal Love, out of the *Jeruſalem* which is above, which is free, and the Mother of all that are born of the Spirit.

Qu. *By what Covenant are the Children of* Iſrael *brought up?*

Anſ. By the Covenant of Faith in the love of the Father, which gives life and ſtrength to obey.

Queſt. *Is there obedience required in the New-Covenant?*

Anſ. Yes, the obedience of Faith: the ſubjection of the nature and heart of the child to the nature and will of the Father, which is as fully natural in the ſubſtance,

as

as it can be represented in any figure or shadow.

Quest. *What if there be disobedience?*

Ans. The Seed it self cannot disobey: but the Vessel in which it is sown, and to which it is united, may prove weak, frail, brittle, yea sometimes stubborn; the weight and chastisement whereof the Seed also bears, and in patient suffering helps and cleanses the Vessel through the virtue of the blood of Jesus, which is felt in the Seed which comes from Jesus. And here is the blood of sprinkling known in the soul, which cleanses the Conscience from dead works, and washes away the iniquity threof.

Quest. *Can any fall from this Covenant?*

Ans. The Covenant is with the Seed for ever, and with the Seeds seed also is it firm: but the streamings forth of the Light of the Covenant do not alwayes beget a Seed, but onely sometimes set mans nature on work, drawing forth the faith, love and obedience thereof. Now this will not hold. All flesh is grass, and at one time or other will fade and wither: but there must be a being begotten of the word, to live and abide for ever.

Qu.

Qu. *How is this begetting?*

Anſ. In the weakening of man's ſtrength day by day, and raiſing up the ſeed, which ſeed gives life and ſtrength to him that is weakened in the manhood.

Qu. *How is this done?*

Anſ. Firſt by drawing forth what is in the man, and then by trying its ſtrength, diſtreſſing the man with exerciſes beyond him. Thus the working man is brought down by the requirings of the Law, they being too hard for him, and the believing Seed is raiſed up, who in the virtue of the living faith (whereof he receiveth ſupplies from the breath of eternal Life) fulfils the righteouſneſs of the Law in the man, and alſo communicates a righteouſneſs of an higher nature unto him.

Qu. *Why doth God take this courſe with man?*

Anſ. It is proper and natural. How can an higher Principle be raiſed in man, but by the death of the former? And how can the former dye, but by ſuch exerciſes, trials and diſtreſſes as are proper to wear out the ſtrength of its nature, and bring it into the nothingneſs, where that which is, ſprings up, when it hath brought down that which appeared, but was not?

O who can understand God's works in the world? who can read the mysterie of Life and Death in man? O what a worm is man before his God? What is his nature? In what state is he able to walk with his God? God can keep covenant with man in any kind of dispensation; but man still fails; his heart deceives him, and he is not able to attain unto, or maintain any considerable proportion of happiness to his soul by his covenant.

Qu. *What is man's Covenant?*

Ans. That which his nature desires of God to make him happy. That Light, that Counsel, that Strength, that Presence which his nature thinks sufficient, will not carry him through. Nay, let God shew Grace and Mercy, and add helps unto him in the riches of his love, yet this will not do. How doth man fall in every dispensation, where there is any stress laid on this *Covenant*, though God is able to be Father and an Husband therein!

Qu. *What is God's Covenant?*

Ans. That which his nature sees needful to make man happy in him, and to keep man in the enjoyment of his happiness. This, so far as it is dispensed, carries through; and when it is dispensed perfectly

ly, will bring forth the perfect redemption and happineſs of the creature.

Now then that ſoul that would travel towards life eternal:

Firſt, Wait to feel a principle of life awakened, raiſed up, ſowen in thy earth by the living God.

2*ly*. Wait to receive all the Light of Life in every kind, that the Father of Lights ſhall pleaſe to cauſe to ſhine in thy heart, from this principle.

3*ly*. Be content to be tried and diſtreſſed, and have thy ſtrength broken day by day, and thy wiſdom confounded, that thou maiſt ſink into and paſs away in the weakneſs and fooliſhneſs which the Lord will bring upon thee before the wiſdom and ſtrength of his life appear in thee.

4*ly*. Keep thine eye and heart on the grace that firſt viſited thee, that there thy rooting may be, and thy hopes faſtned. O receive the Light ſtill from the hand of grace, and look up thither for ſtrength to obey the Light, that the earthly man get not a life in the obedience, and thou forget the grace, and thy need of Chriſt the anointed of the Lord; and ſo thou live on what thou haſt received from God, and not Chriſt live in thee, and look upon thy

working

working obedience as the righteousness and feel not the righteousness of Christ which is the free justification of his life and power, washing away the guilt of the ungodly.

Ah narrow is the path that leads unto life, none can enter in at it, but the seed and the seeds seed, even that which dies in the creatureship, in the principle which *Adam* received from the Lord, and springs up in the nature and being of this seed. Read this, O travellers towards the Holy Land with the eye which God creates, that ye may run certainly in his begettings, in his creatings, in his leadings towards his land of eternal rest, even in the certain law and power of his endless life, and not in the uncertain reasonings, imaginings, and guessings at things by the humane understanding.

THE END.